

PRIORITIZATION: HOME CV & EMERGENCY HOUSING VOUCHERS

The funds made available in the American Rescue Plan Act provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to significantly reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in our nation. But to accomplish that goal, the resources — \$5 billion in the HOME CV program and \$5 billion for Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) — must be used quickly and strategically. And these are sometimes conflicting goals.

To significantly reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness, the funds will have to be used for people who are literally homeless now, and high need people will have to be a priority. This strategy will also help achieve the goal of reducing racial disproportionality in the population, and disparities in assistance.

But to move quickly will require some flexibility, and may mean moving forward with households that can be housed more easily and quickly, or standing up programs that house a mix of clients.

A way to achieve both is to prioritize a number of categories of homeless households and be prepared to move forward quickly with whichever can be matched to the housing and supports available. As Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), HOME Participating Jurisdictions and Continuums of Care come together to agree on who they will prioritize for assistance, they might consider *people who are experiencing literal homelessness* including the following groups:

- Unsheltered (including those in encampments)
- Long-term shelter stayers
- Chronically homeless, disabled, and/or in need of permanent supportive housing
- Living in families with children under 6
- Pregnant
- Over the age of 55



On the other hand, to achieve the goal there are some purposes *for which the funds should NOT be used*.

- Do NOT use the funds to prevent homelessness (use Emergency Rental Assistance)
- Do NOT automatically prioritize people in rapid rehousing or those leaving non-congregate shelter as a group, but look for those who are high need and have no alternative housing.

